

## Chapter 8

### **CHARACTER OF GOD 3** **FATHERHOOD OF GOD 1**

- I. How do we as humans form a picture of a God who is Spirit? It has been said that a child can observe their own father and see God or observe their mother and see the church. The reality is that many of us do not have an earthly father, do not know our fathers in a relational way or at the worst have experienced some type of abuse or ill treatment from our fathers. None of us have experienced the perfect example of a perfect parent. In order to have the right picture or concept of who God is we will need to go back to His example and His words of instruction. We need a proper concept of God as a loving heavenly Father to be able to fully believe and trust in Him and His ways. God has offered Himself as the perfect Father so we can begin the process of putting to rest the past hurts and disappointments. (Psalm 27:10)
- II. Jesus is the way, but the Father is the destination. God desires a relationship with us and chose to bring about that relationship through His Son, Jesus Christ. Through the death of Jesus on the cross a way was made for us to become children of God. (1 Peter 3:18)

Seeing God as **OUR** Father (which is His purpose for us) will meet needs and fill gaps in our lives both relationally and emotionally. Because we live in a real world of hurts and disappointments, we will all have these needs to one degree or another.

- A. We all have a need to have an IDENTITY; to know “who I am.” Through faith in Jesus Christ we now have a name that is written in heaven. We have identity as a child of God.
- B. SELF-WORTH is something that many of us will be searching for. Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, we can know that we have value. We are worth someone having given His life for us. We are now children of the King of Kings.
- C. We have the SECURITY of knowing that God is a covenant God and that He will not let us down. Many other things (jobs, government, people, even our earthly parents) will disappoint us, but God is always faithful to His children. (1 John 3:1)
- III. What are some of the ways that the Bible pictures God as our Father?
- A. God shows us the picture of himself as the father of the nation of Israel. He tells Moses to explain to Pharaoh that the people of Israel are His, God’s first-born son. In the Song of Moses from Deuteronomy, God says that He is the Father, the Creator, the one who formed and made Israel. When Israel was still a child, God loved him and called him out of Egypt. (Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 32:6; Hosea 11:1)
- B. We also see God the Father referred to in scripture as the first person of the Trinity. “*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God (the Father), and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*” (2 Corinthians 13:14) (Matthew 28:19; John 14:26; John 15:26)
- C. In scripture there are many other references to God as Father. We see Him as the

## *Foundation for Christian Service – Term 1 – Chapter 8 – Character of God 3*

Creator, Molder. He is the one that will never fail or disown us. He is a father to the fatherless and a defender of widows. There is a very special promise from God to those who have been forsaken by their father and mother. He is a Father that can and does give wisdom and revelation so that as His children we may know Him better. The character of a good father is that he is not afraid for his children to know him. (Isaiah 63:16; Isaiah 64:8; Psalm 68:5; Psalm 27:10; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:17)

- D. Finally we see God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." (1 Peter 1:3)* Throughout Jesus' ministry and in his final hours in the garden and on the cross, he refers to God as His Father. We also hear him call God Abba Father, a term used by children -- in our culture "daddy" or "papa." Jesus also began to teach His disciples to call God their Father. (Luke 2:49; John 15:1; Luke 22:42; Luke 23:34; Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6; John 20:17; Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2)

- IV. We understand from scripture that only those that are saved can have the privilege of calling God, Father.

*"Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God." (John 8:39-47)*

### **QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION**

#### Chapter 8 Character of God 3 - Fatherhood of God 1

1. What can you see as some of the reasons we might find it easier to relate to Jesus as a brother or friend rather than to God as a father?
2. Does God offer a hope and encouragement to those that are in this world without family; orphans, widows? How does He provide for them as a father?